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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Chesterfield Heights is an excellent example of the middle- and upper-class residential suburbs that emerged as the City of Norfolk expanded from its central core with the advent of the streetcar lines. Located to the north of the city proper, the Chesterfield Heights neighborhood first began to develop in 1889 with the platting of Riverside, an upper-class residential suburb. By 1900, the streetcar line provided easy access to downtown Norfolk from outlying suburbs like Riverside, which was promoted by the Riverside Land Company as a suburban retreat that allowed an escape from the modern city. In 1904, the Chesterfield Syndicate Corporation followed suit and submitted the original plat for Chesterfield Heights, a residential neighborhood located on the Ohio Creek just to the east of Riverside. Chesterfield Heights was laid out and specifically advertised to attract upper-income residents with strict building requirements, extensive amenities, attractive landscaping and generously sized lots along the waterfront. Chesterfield Heights was touted as being “Norfolk’s elite residential suburb” with the “most attractive home site(s) in Tidewater Virginia.” The development company’s ambitious dream of a restrictive upper-class neighborhood never completely materialized as the initial pace of development in Chesterfield Heights and Riverside was gradual in the first decades of the 20th century. Eventually, as lot sizes diminished with the intense competition of neighboring suburban developments during the advent of World War I, Chesterfield Heights began to cater to the middle class. The resulting suburb, which ultimately incorporated the neighborhood of Riverside within its boundaries, expresses the underlying goals and ideals of the original developers and the housing needs of the World War I era. The 85-acre neighborhood is defined by its well-landscaped streets, organized in a slightly irregular grid plan oriented east west; and by its high-style and vernacular single-family dwellings, many supported by freestanding garages.

The proposed district meets National Register criteria A and C, and is significant under the themes of architecture and community planning/development with the period of significance extending from 1889 to 1950. The early-to-mid-20th-century buildings often exhibit vernacular, less detailed interpretations of the more elaborate styles erected decades earlier. Although a number of these dwellings have altered materials, the overall integrity remains intact. The area

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making up the Chesterfield Heights neighborhood consists of 326 properties, including 308 single dwellings, ten multiple dwellings, two commercial buildings, four churches, a small park with a monument, and a shipyard (with nine contributing support buildings, a contributing dock, a non-contributing dry-dock, and a non-contributing power station). Additionally there are 186 other supporting outbuildings, including seventy-four sheds, ninety garages, a water tank, two guesthouses, a trailer, and three carports. There are 292 contributing primary resources and 112 contributing secondary resources.

Criterion A: That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

The first phase of suburban development in the area that became Chesterfield Heights began circa 1889 under the Riverside Land Company, which created the residential suburb of Riverside along the eastern side of Ohio Creek. According to historic maps, the property originally consisted of fourteen blocks and sat just to the east of the city's 1887 Brambleton annexation, which developed quickly.¹ The neighborhood ran from the Eastern Branch of the Elizabeth River north to Highland Avenue and the Norfolk and Virginia Beach Railroad tracks, with Holly Avenue running East-West, dividing the subdivision, while First, Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth Streets ran North-South.² The Norfolk and Virginia Beach Railroad divided the property from the adjacent "Holly Farm" of C.W. Wilson, which was located to the north. An historic 1889 map denotes the property as the "Riverside Land Company Plan No. 1."³

By 1900, the streetcar line began to allow easy access to downtown Norfolk from outlying areas, essentially opening vast areas to suburban development by the first decade of the 20th century. Upper-middle-class communities such as Ghent and Riverview were established at this time, promoting the escapist qualities of a suburban retreat from the ills of the modern city. With a number of such communities already established, additional areas of the city, including Chesterfield Heights and others along the developing streetcar lines, quickly followed suit.

The second phase of suburban development in what became known as Chesterfield Heights took place on the southern portion of the Haynes tract, known as "Fielding." The Chesterfield Heights Corporation purchased the property in February 1904 from Karl Menoper for \$150,000.

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An 1889 map shows six buildings on the property, which was surrounded by farmland.⁴ The development company, with Sam A. Moore serving as President, filed the official plat for the newly devised suburb of Chesterfield Heights on November 5, 1904. The proposed plan, titled "Plan A of the Chesterfield Heights Suburb of Norfolk," depicted the neighborhood's original lot divisions, street layout, and open spaces. The new subdivision was composed of a slightly irregular grid plan, which took advantage of the shoreline of the southerly Eastern Branch of the Elizabeth River. Advertisements stated that Chesterfield Heights, with its natural elevation (allowing cellars and good drainage), waterfront location (without the "dirt and disagreeable conditions" of industry) and southern exposure (for winter heating and summer cooling) provided the most suitable area near the city for residential development.⁵ In 1904, the company invested another \$150,000 for a streetcar connection to the city, brick and macadam paving, water and sewer systems, and electric lighting, under the direction of engineer Lee Shaffer. Soon after inception, the neighborhood had tree-lined streets and "all city improvements" and boasted no city taxes, the coming of convenient streetcar access with an eight-minute ride to the city, and a scenic park overlooking the Elizabeth River.⁶

In an effort to attract the intended exclusive clientele, Chesterfield Heights was touted as being "Norfolk's elite residential suburb" with the "most attractive home site(s) in Tidewater Virginia."⁷ The Chesterfield Heights Corporation, backed by "prominent and progressive Pennsylvania and West Virginia capitalists," claimed to be developing "Norfolk's finest suburb."⁸ Advertisements for the opening day celebrations, replete with salesman on hand, stated that the "shrewd buyers will recognize in this an exceptional opportunity to secure choice locations before the rise in price begins" as "everyone by now has heard of this delightful home site."⁹ The highest prices were for those lots on the waterfront, with the less expensive lots making up the interior sections. The advertisements also lured prospective buyers with sales pitches including "you will never live elsewhere after you've seen Chesterfield Heights."¹⁰

From the outset, approximately 814 lots, organized into thirty-eight blocks along thirteen streets, were envisioned for residential development. However, during the subdivision's initial decade of development between 1904 and 1914, only approximately twenty-five buildings were constructed. Soon thereafter, lot sizes diminished and the pace of development in Chesterfield Heights quickened, as was experienced in other suburban developments in Norfolk. The suburbs

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were greatly effected by the influx of workers brought to the port city on the eve of World War I. In the years leading up to America's entry into the war in Europe, a second period of significant growth began. By 1923, Chesterfield Heights became part of a twenty-five square mile tract that was annexed to the City of Norfolk. The second building phase lasted until 1950, with only thirty-five additional buildings constructed after 1950.

Therefore, Chesterfield Heights meets Criterion A of the National Register of Historic Places, as a planned community that catered to the expanding suburban population of Norfolk in the early decades of the 20th century. Although Riverside was originally platted as a separate community, its historic associations with Chesterfield Heights were established soon after the later community's development.

Criteria C: That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

Chesterfield Heights retains many of its original early-20th-century residential revival and American-movement buildings, the majority of which were designed by local builders or architects. The earliest houses erected were generally imposing Colonial Revival- and Queen Anne-style residences built for upper-middle and middle-class residents. Construction was originally focused along Chesterfield Boulevard on the pricier and more picturesque waterfront lots, as well as the adjacent Marlboro Avenue. These large single dwellings, ornamented to the specific tastes of the property owners, were sited on spacious lots with landscaped yards. Each of buildings exhibited high-style ornamentation, including wrap-around porches, bracketing, denticulated moldings, sleeping porches, and an array of detailed cladding materials.

By the time residential construction began to take off in the late 1920s, house sizes and stylistic features had begun to change in response to a new clientele. Larger numbers of smaller, less ornamented houses were built throughout the neighborhood. The dominant styles were modest Colonial Revival dwellings balanced by a significant number of Craftsman-style Bungalows.

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These later dwellings were home to middle-income residents, and exhibited less architectural ornament than the houses erected prior to 1914.

Therefore, the suburban neighborhood of Chesterfield Heights meets Criterion C of the National Register of Historic Places for its substantial concentration of high style and, as the market demanded, less ornate architecture.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Created from Norfolk County in 1682, the City of Norfolk is located along the eastern seaboard in Tidewater, Virginia. It is bounded to the east by the City of Virginia Beach, the cities of Chesapeake and Portsmouth to the south and west, respectively, and to the north by the Elizabeth River and the Chesapeake Bay. Originally a borough, Norfolk achieved city status in 1845 with a total land area that encompassed 1.3 square miles.

A significant period of growth in the city began during the French and Indian War (1754-1763), when the population grew from 1,000 to 6,000 by the time of the American Revolution (1775-1783). Norfolk emerged slowly as streets became lined with elegantly styled Federal townhouses. With the hostilities between France and England beginning in 1793, Norfolk resumed a role as an important seaport, prospering through the supply of ships for both countries. This significant role, interrupted numerous times throughout the 19th century, became stabilized after the Civil War (1861-1865). Thus, the City of Norfolk grew into a major port of trade with cotton, corn, flour, peanuts, tobacco, wheat, timber, and coal becoming its main exports. Long-time area merchants and newcomers to the city re-opened Norfolk to the cotton trade, making it one of the two largest cotton ports in the nation during the Reconstruction and Growth Period (1865-1917). Additionally, lumber and shingle mills, along with other commercial and industrial ventures, ensured the area's continued stability and encouraged the physical and residential growth of the city northward from the commercial core along West Freemason Street.

Along with the post-Civil War economic growth came an increasing population and expanding city boundaries. In the period between 1870 and 1914, Norfolk saw substantial changes in its

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residential character, growing from a small urban, port town to an expanding city with many outlying suburban communities. This suburban growth, induced in part by the electric streetcar established in 1894, occurred in phases beginning after Reconstruction and continuing well into the mid-20th century.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Norfolk underwent five significant boundary expansions, in 1887, 1890, 1902, 1906, and 1911, increasing the city's area from 1.3 to nine square miles. The first boundary expansion to occur since 1845 was in 1887, when the city annexed Brambleton, a residential community separated from Norfolk by Newton's Creek. The acquisition of Brambleton increased the city's population and encouraged future city annexations. In 1890, Atlantic City was added, which, unlike the established residential community of Brambleton, was primarily undeveloped land that attracted developers wishing to improve housing for the growing population.

The expansion of Norfolk during the late 19th century mirrored that of many cities throughout the country, as the development of the streetcar became synonymous with the expansion of city boundaries and suburban growth. The electric streetcars that had replaced the original horse-drawn cars enabled the suburban development to extend farther and farther outside the city in accordance with the greater speed afforded by the electric cars. Major players in these expanding suburbs were often real estate development companies that laid out and advertised "planned" residential neighborhoods on the outskirts of major cities. The earliest of these outlying planned communities, such as Llewellyn Park in New Jersey (laid out in 1855), were firmly established upper-class neighborhoods. Yet, with the growth of electric streetcar systems in the 1880s and 1890s, greater numbers of middle-class subdivisions began to ring American cities.

In Norfolk, this transformation first began in 1866, when the first street railway franchise was granted to the Norfolk City Railroad Company. In 1869, the company had laid the first tracks along Main Street, later to be extended along Church and Granby Streets reaching the residential areas north of the city. By 1894, the most desirable areas for development were those located along the rapidly expanding electric streetcar lines, which replaced the original horse-drawn lines of the 1860s. Expansion of the city spurred by this modern form of transportation occurred

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primarily after the turn of the 20th century with the annexation of numerous tracts of platted land: Park Place (VDHR 122-5087), which included an 1890s suburb of the same name north of the city, was annexed in 1902; the port town of Berkley (VDHR 122-0824) in 1906; and, in 1911, the unimproved tract of Lambert's Point and the small community of Huntersville.

Norfolk investors, encouraged by the rapidly expanding transportation system, underwrote dozens of suburban improvement companies during this period. In 1890 alone, fifty-eight land and improvement companies were chartered in Norfolk. The first, and most significant residential development in Norfolk of this period, was the city's first planned suburb of Ghent (VDHR 122-0061). Originally a 220-acre tract of mostly rural land, Ghent was subdivided in 1890 by the newly established Norfolk Company and developed with freestanding, single-family dwellings that appealed to middle-and upper-middle-income residents. Following the development of Ghent, several suburban residential communities began to take shape, including Riverview (1900, VDHR 122-0823), Lafayette Residence Park (1902, VDHR 122-0826), Colonial Place (1904, VDHR 122-0825), Ballentine Place (1909, VDHR 122-0829), and Winona (1909, VDHR 122-0828).

The explosion of suburban real estate interests and a limited clientele caused stiff competition among the various suburbs. Thus, the expansion of many of these suburban neighborhoods was limited during the early 1900s through the 1910s. During World War I (1914-1918), Norfolk's location and prosperous industries made the port city an obvious center for military and civilian production. The expansion of wartime industry in the World War I to World War II Period (1914-1945) greatly impacted the city's suburban development as an influx of workers swelled the city's population, creating a demand for housing that led to the rapid development of many of the suburbs platted in the early years of the 20th century.

Chesterfield Heights Prior to Suburban Development in 1904

Prior to subdivision as a residential suburban neighborhood, the land along the Eastern Branch of the Elizabeth River on which Chesterfield Heights would be established was largely undeveloped. The property was located within the boundaries of Norfolk County.¹¹ The suburban development of this area of Norfolk, east of the city's central core and just across Ohio

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Creek from the city's 1887 annexation of Brambleton, began with the advent of Riverside in the late 19th century. Platted as the "Riverside Land Company's Plan No. 1" circa 1889, the plan utilized ten blocks along the Ohio Creek. The Haynes family owned the area to the east of Riverside. According to historic bird's eye view maps in 1892, this property appears to have been primarily utilized as pastures and light agricultural farmland and contained only a handful of farmhouses.¹²

The 1900 federal census for the Tanner's Creek District of Norfolk, which differentiated the "Riverside" community, states that most of the residents were of Caucasian descent, primarily from Virginia and North Carolina. The vast majority of these residents were laborers, many renting their property from merchants. The household size ranged from one to seven persons in over fifty households. The census is not specific enough to pinpoint statistical information for the adjacent tract that would soon be platted as Chesterfield Heights, as the Tanner's Creek district included vast acreage of not yet annexed land.¹³

Initial Development in Chesterfield Heights (1904-1914)

A significant impetus to suburban growth occurred with one of the first projects undertaken jointly by the New Norfolk Company and the Norfolk Railway & Light Company. The company aimed to attract residents to outlying areas of Norfolk with the extension of the streetcar lines. The streetcar line made the suburbs easily accessible to downtown Norfolk. Prospects for suburban development brightened with the establishment of the streetcar line, and communities such as Chesterfield Heights began to take shape.

In February 1904, the principal partners of the Chesterfield Heights Corporation, a local land development firm, bought a large portion of the Haynes property for the sole purpose of establishing a streetcar suburb. The original plat of Chesterfield Heights consisted of approximately 130 acres, divided into approximately 814 building lots on thirty-eight blocks. The residential area was bounded by the Norfolk and Southern Railway to the north, Riviera Street along the Hardy and Lowenberg lands to the east, the Eastern Branch of the Elizabeth River to the south, and the Riverside tract to the west.

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The first phase of construction in Chesterfield Heights began as early as 1904 and continued through 1914. The City of Norfolk experienced a building boom between 1907 and 1908, just after the establishment of Chesterfield Heights. Many prominent suburbs reveled in the increased development. However, this citywide period of prosperity was quickly followed by a slump in housing construction between 1909 and 1910, as Chesterfield Heights was still attempting to establish itself as the city's finest suburb.

Real estate development firms throughout the city, including the Chesterfield Syndicate Corporation, as the company became known, attempted to attract residents and halt the building depression by publishing full-page advertisements in local newspapers between 1910 and 1917.¹⁴ One such advertisement, which ran in the *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch* in March of 1917, included pleas that Chesterfield Heights with "excellent car service rendered by the Virginia Railway and Power Company" was the "only place within fifteen minutes of the center of the city where desirable home sites can still be bought for the remarkably low price of \$375.00."¹⁵ The advertisement continues to laud the neighborhood boasting that it has "all improvements" and that "owners continue to develop new possibilities," while a \$25,000 public school and a shipbuilding plant were to be constructed in the community. A map of the neighborhood, drawn by the Morrie Company of Norfolk, accompanies the advertisement showing the location of the streetcar line, the railroad, the school, and the shipbuilding plant. The western portion of the neighborhood continues to be depicted on maps as Riverside, with open land to the east separating Chesterfield Heights from the holdings of the West Virginia Land Corporation.¹⁶ Despite these efforts, the plans for the establishment of a residential suburb on the tract were slow to form, in part due to the fierce suburban tract competition and the continued building slump.

The 1910 census, taken just after the establishment of Chesterfield Heights, designated both the Riverside and Chesterfield Heights areas of the Tanner's Creek District. During this period, there are approximately seventy households listed in Riverside and thirty in Chesterfield Heights. The ethnic make-up is exclusively Caucasian for both of the neighborhoods, consisting primarily of laborers, rather than the more "high-class" residents the developers had envisioned.¹⁷ Historic maps from 1910 reveal that the Brenon Lumber Company and an adjacent woodworking veneer shop were established along Fourth Street in Riverside.¹⁸ This industry appears to have operated

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until the 1960s when the buildings were demolished for the construction of the Norfolk-Virginia Beach Expressway (now Interstate-264).

The majority of the buildings constructed during the initial building phase of Chesterfield Heights were typical of domestic construction throughout the nation and were influenced by the forms, materials, details, or other features associated with the architectural styles that were currently in vogue. In this manner, the original plan and design of buildings in Chesterfield Heights followed a more high-style pattern, with the majority of the dwellings exhibiting the Colonial Revival and Queen Anne styles, though the Italianate style is also represented with a single dwelling. Additionally, more vernacular interpretations of the popular styles are visible as well. As these new architectural trends were spread from the cities to the suburbs, and later to the rural communities, the styles were modified to accommodate smaller resources, utilizing varied materials that typically reduced construction costs, as evidenced in suburban neighborhoods such as Chesterfield Heights.

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Second Phase of Development in Chesterfield Heights (1915-1950)

As Norfolk expanded over the course of the 19th and 20th centuries, the city appropriated surrounding unincorporated land, thereby, reducing the size of Norfolk County. Chesterfield Heights remained within the boundaries of Norfolk County until 1923, when a large twenty-five square mile tract of platted land was annexed to the growing city. Most of the tract lay north of the Lafayette River, and included the suburbs of Winona (VDHR 122-0828), Lafayette Residence Park (VDHR 122-0826), Edgewater, Larchmont, Titustown, Meadowbrook, Lochaven, Ocean View, Willoughby, Lenox, Fairmont Park, Ballentine Place (VDHR-122-0829), Riverview (VDHR 122-0823), Chesterfield Heights, Newton Park, and Campostella.¹⁹ This annexation increased the city's population from an estimated 31,000 to nearly 150,000, and nearly quadrupled the land size. The move to annex was spurred by a desire to portray Norfolk as a progressive city, and the need to acquire a larger tax base. In turn, the city began a program aimed at upgrading the newly acquired suburbs with fire protection services and schools.

In 1917, advertisements by the Chesterfield Syndicate Company continue to refer to the Riverside and Chesterfield Heights as separate entities, though soon thereafter the neighborhoods merged. Residents were lured with the "remarkably low price" building lots as there were a number of vacant lots remaining.²⁰ The federal census of 1920 reveals that the majority of the families living in Chesterfield Heights were native Virginians, or had moved from nearby states such as North Carolina and Maryland, though a handful were from other states and Canada. Household sizes ranged from one to eight persons.²¹ Many of the larger households in the suburban neighborhoods included several boarders, an outgrowth of the World War I housing demand. Many of the residents of Chesterfield Heights in 1923 were solidly middle and working class. The occupations noted in the city directory indicated that the neighborhood was home to a preponderance of business managers, salesmen, and laborers. These include R.L. Gornto (president of the Twin City Tob Company, 122 Chesterfield Boulevard), Frank Staples (carpenter, 306 Chesterfield Boulevard), C.E. Sears (chief clerk of the Virginia Ry Company), J.E. Woodhouse (promoter, 231 Kimball Terrace), J.A. Winslow (treasurer, Norfolk Class Building Association), J.T. Spencer (dockmaster, 320 Marlboro Avenue), J.W. Watson (owner, Watson Construction Company, 314 Marlboro Avenue), and W.H. Saul (Salesman, Murray Lumber Company, 211 Victoria Avenue), among others.²² Similar findings were revealed in the

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1940 directories. Chesterfield Boulevard continued to house more prominent residents, including Edward M. Albright (Secretary-Treasurer of Albright-Hopkins Flowers, 2614 Chesterfield Boulevard), Reverend W. Rush Loving (pastor, Spurgeon Memorial Baptist Church, 2702 Chesterfield Boulevard), and David E. Etheridge (Assistant U.S. Postmaster, 2724 Chesterfield Boulevard). Other residents of Chesterfield Heights in 1940 included Costos Maroulis (manager, Albany Company, 2825 Earls court Avenue), Albert Oliver (autoworker, Ford Motor Company, 2720 Marlboro Avenue), Guy B. Craft (filling station employee, 2729 Stanhope Avenue).²³

Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps of 1920 reveal that there were approximately 165 buildings standing on the original Chesterfield Heights and Riverside lots. By the 1920s, historic maps no longer refer to Riverside, as the name Chesterfield Heights envelops both neighborhoods during this period. Chesterfield Heights continued to grow with the construction of housing, almost wholly constructed in the Colonial Revival and Craftsman/Bungalow styles and forms on unimproved lots laid out in the early part of the 20th century. Encompassing both single-family and multiple-family housing, the well-established neighborhood possesses many modest wood frame dwellings, dating from the second quarter of the 20th century, that were stylistically integrated to stand alongside the more imposing dwelling houses constructed prior to 1910.

Many of the bungalows erected during this period, throughout the United States were influenced by magazines aimed at the nation's more mobile consumers. Among the most influential was *Ladies Home Journal*, which around 1900 published designs for small model homes--often in chalet and period styles--complete plans for prefabricated frames, specifications for fireproofing, and such novel conveniences as electricity, plumbing, and gas ranges. The *Craftsman* was responsible for the widespread popularity of the Craftsman bungalow, typically a snug one-and-a-half story house with a wide overhanging roof with exposed rafter ends, multi-light windows, a large porch with massive supports, and simple interiors with built-in amenities such as cupboards and cozy inglenooks. Many of these Craftsman-inspired details melded the bungalow form with the style perpetually.

By 1921, a significant number of lots within the original boundaries remained unimproved.²⁴ Sanborn maps from 1921 reveal that the eastern portion of the original plat, stretching two blocks

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east of Merrimac Street (Ballentine Boulevard), including Carolina and Riviera Streets, was not initially developed. The Chesterfield Heights Public School was constructed by 1921, as promised in numerous advertisements, and was the only building in the eastern portion of the community, though the adjacent east end of Victoria Avenue was populated shortly thereafter.²⁵

The only commercial activity in the neighborhood was along Kimball Terrace, although it does not appear to have been developed as a commercial strip until about 1930. The 1930 city directories reveal that the 2300 and 2400 blocks of Kimball Terrace housed the Sou Trans Company Ship Building Department (the southern plant of the Norfolk Shipbuilding Corporation, or NORSHIPCO), the L. Terwillinger and Company and the Sanford and Brooks warehouses, a barber shop, a confectioner's shop, and the Humma and Graul office supplies shop. By 1940, Lea's Esso Station was located at 2105 Kimball Terrace, while a grocery, beauty shop and drug store were new to the 2400 block of Kimball Terrace.

Final Phase of Development in Chesterfield Heights (1950-Present)

Of the 327 properties in Chesterfield Heights, only thirty-five located within the original boundaries of Riverside and Chesterfield Heights were constructed after 1950. The architectural character of this infill construction generally followed the lines of current fashions in middle-class residential housing. This period marks a shift in building trends, which generally consisted of smaller, less architecturally detailed dwellings. Although conceived in the original 1904 plat, many of the remaining interior lots were not improved until this period, though many of the eastern lots near the 1921 school remained unimproved.

By 1950 there were only approximately forty-seven unimproved lots, although the Sanborn maps reveal that a portion of the Ohio Creek was anticipated to be infilled and divided into approximately thirty additional blocks.²⁶ With the influx of defense-industry workers to the port city of Norfolk during World War II (1940-1945), many suburban residents, including those in Chesterfield Heights, rented rooms to workers. After the war, a number of the original single-family dwellings were converted for use as boarding houses, twin dwellings, or apartments. After the close of World War II, residential and commercial communities began to develop at an increasing rate, requiring vast amounts of additional housing. As a whole, the country, and

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Norfolk, was impacted by the following conditions: an unprecedented rise in automobile use and relative decline of mass transit; the evolution of regional shopping centers; and the presence of the defense community, with a need for additional housing.

During the 1950s and 1960s, with the growth of Norfolk's suburbs and the decline of the city center, many middle-class inner-city residents began to move to the outlying suburbs. Chesterfield Heights, by this time, was located near the center of Norfolk, and consequently began to lose some of its middle-class residents. As people moved out, the area became more transient and property values began to fall.

As many Norfolk neighborhoods began to suffer from similar circumstances and fall into disrepair, the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority applied for, and was the first to receive funds from, the 1949 Federal Housing Act aimed at rehabilitating neighborhoods. In order to protect other neighborhoods, housing codes began to establish strict requirements. Accordingly, every room had to contain a window and houses were required to have interior running water. Such measures were taken "to protect older middle-class areas such as Ghent, Riverview, Fairmont Park, Brambleton, and Winona from deterioration."²⁷ Similar efforts were attempted in other older suburbs, including Chesterfield Heights and Ballentine Place. However, some of the clearing of dilapidated areas of downtown resulted in the creation of public housing units, including the two-story brick buildings of Grandy Park within the original boundaries of Chesterfield Heights. The eastern portion of Chesterfield Heights, which was never improved except for the school and a small number of nearby dwellings, was primarily disassociated with the neighborhood once the Grandy Park public housing complex, containing 400 units, was constructed in 1952. Additional changes occurred in the 1970s, including the demolition of the original circa 1921 public school and the erection of a new, larger school on the site.

In Chesterfield Heights, working-class residents, both renters and owners, began to take the place of the middle class. By the 1960s, the neighborhood was fully racially integrated. Residents of Chesterfield Heights in 1960 included Leon Gornto (owner Gornto Salvage and Sales, 2800 Chesterfield Boulevard), Walter Phillips (lab worker, Vepco, 2102 Kimball Terrace), and William J. Ramsay (clerk U.S. Post Office, 2622 Marlboro Avenue), among others. The commercial activity on Kimball Terrace included Sutton's Riverside Store, the NORSHIPCO

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shipbuilding plant, McLean Contracting Company and warehouse, and the White Front Market.

The last building to be constructed during Chesterfield Heights' period of significance is the St. Luke's Holiness Church of Christ's Disciples located at 80 Norchester Avenue, constructed circa 1950. The historic building marks the end of the building boom in the neighborhood and reflects the need for community-oriented buildings. Three other churches were previously established in the community, including the Monticello Baptist Church at 2722 Kimball Terrace (1925), the church at 2400 Kimball Terrace (1930), and the Garrett Community Church at 2843 Victoria Avenue (1940). The Monticello Baptist Church was moved to its present site in 1964. The establishment of these four neighborhood churches further evidences the stability of the community by 1950.

A significant change in the neighborhood occurred with the construction of the Virginia-Beach Norfolk Expressway (VA-44) in 1967. Running along the original north boundary railroad line (Highland Avenue), the expressway infringed upon the original neighborhood boundaries. However, much of the area along Highland Avenue remained unimproved. Approximately twenty-five buildings, located in the original Riverside development, were demolished for the construction project.²⁸ In 1999, the expressway was designated as Interstate-264. Despite the loss of a number of historic buildings, the expressway did buffer the neighborhood from the effects of encroaching commercial interests. The only commercial buildings remain located along Kimball Terrace, where commercial activity has historically been located since about 1930. Chesterfield Heights also remains isolated from heavy traffic, in part due to the dead-end nature of many of the neighborhood's streets. Chesterfield Heights, now in the center of the Norfolk city-limits, has the added advantage of easy access to interstates, downtown, and medical, commercial and cultural areas. Though the I-264 route cut through the rear yards of the northernmost lots in Chesterfield Heights, the structure creates a physical barrier that shields the neighborhood, retaining the small village feel of the original neighborhood.

The shipbuilding plant, located along the Eastern Branch of the Elizabeth River and Kimball Terrace, was owned by the Norfolk Shipbuilding and Drydock Corporation (NORSHIPCO), one of the nation's "Top 100" defense contractors. In 1998, the company sold the facility to Colonna's Yachts, a family-owned ship repair company in operation in Norfolk since 1875. The

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existence of the shipyard in Chesterfield Heights since about 1930 is significant, tying the community to the adjacent waterways and incorporating the shipping industry, the lifeblood of Norfolk.

Following the initiation of urban renewal in Norfolk, interest in revitalizing the city's close-in neighborhoods blossomed. An influx of funds and local interest in the neighborhood spurred resurgence in the community. Professional middle-class residents began to move back to the area, buying and restoring houses. By 1990, the neighborhood consisted of a mostly middle-class and partly working-class African-American population with a varied age makeup. Chesterfield Heights may never have fully achieved the elite high-class image envisioned by its developers, but it has evolved into a pleasant and diverse middle class neighborhood retaining much of its historic integrity. Today, the community of Chesterfield Heights along with Riverside, appears closely as it was originally envisioned by its founders, who platted the rural tracts at the turn of the 20th century. It stands as a quiet residential community conveniently located near the city's downtown commercial district. Much of the original well-landscaped design, with tree-lined streets, public green-space along the waterfront, and the presence of a small small park with World War II commemorative monument, remains intact.

¹ G.M. Hopkins. *Map of Norfolk, VA and Vicinity*. Library of Congress, Washington, DC, 1889. Plate 9.

² These streets were changed between 1921 and 1928 to Filer, Forbes, Firth, Thayer and Sedgewick Streets. The railroad tracks became Highland Avenue.

³ Hopkins, 1889, Plate 9.

⁴ Hopkins, 1889, Plate 9.

⁵ The information was taken from an advertisement mentioned in the VDHR Preliminary Information Form for Chesterfield Heights prepared by Hanbury, Evans, Newill, Vlattas and Company, Norfolk, VA.

⁶ Advertisement. *Virginian-Pilot* October 19, 1904.

⁷ Advertisements. *Virginian-Pilot* October 19 and October 20, 1904.

⁸ Advertisement *Norfolk Dispatch*, 1904.

⁹ Advertisement. *Virginian-Pilot* October 19, 1904

¹⁰ Advertisements. *Virginian-Pilot* October 19, 1904

¹¹ Norfolk was established in 1691 with the division of what was then known as Upper Norfolk County, formed in 1639.

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¹² *Panorama of Norfolk and Surroundings* 1892. Map Division. Library of Congress.

¹³ U.S. Bureau of the Census. The Census of 1900, Norfolk, VA. National Archives.

¹⁴ The Chesterfield Heights Corporation became the Chesterfield Development Corporation in 1914 and then the Chesterfield Syndicate Corporation in 1917.

¹⁵ Advertisement. *Norfolk-Ledger Dispatch* March 17, 1917.

¹⁶ Advertisement. *Norfolk-Ledger Dispatch* March 17, 1917.

¹⁷ U.S. Bureau of the Census. The Census of 1910, Norfolk, VA. National Archives.

¹⁸ *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps*, Norfolk, VA, 1910.

¹⁹ Thomas C. Parramore, *Norfolk: The First Four Centuries* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1994), p. 311.

²⁰ The school served the community until the 1970s when it was demolished.

²¹ U.S. Bureau of the Census. The Census of 1920, Norfolk, VA. National Archives.

²² *Hill's Norfolk and Portsmouth City Directory*. Richmond, VA: Hill Directory Co., Inc., 1923.

²³ *Hill's Norfolk and Portsmouth City Directory*. Richmond, VA: Hill Directory Co., Inc., 1940.

²⁴ *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps*. Norfolk, VA, 1928-1950.

²⁵ *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps*. Norfolk, VA, 1921.

²⁶ *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps*. Norfolk, VA, 1921. The infill lots never materialized.

²⁷ Parramore, p. 352.

²⁸ *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps*, 1928-1950.